



## Michigan Victim Alliance

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Dear Mr. Opsommer,

On behalf of the Michigan Victim Alliance Board of Directors, I would like to take this opportunity to commend you for all of your work with our Teen Summit Program, the Victim Impact Panels at W. J. Maxey Training School, and past presentations to the MSU Criminal Justice Honor Society.

As you are aware, teen victimization is enormous problem in our country. While adolescents are twice as likely as adults to become victims of violent crime, many teens do not report the incident or seek help. In many cases the reason for this is that the victims are embarrassed about the incident, do not know the incident constitutes a crime, and/or are not aware of the services designed to assist them. The obstacles to ending the cycle of teen victimization can only be overcome through education and awareness activities within local communities. By recognizing the tremendous positive influence that young people can have on other young people, the Teen Summit Program empowers teenagers to address the problem of teen victimization in a meaningful and productive way. The feedback we have received from your presentations at our four Teen Summits has been very positive. The students have enjoyed the sessions and have been very impressed with your residents' openness about their experiences in the juvenile system.

I would also like to thank you for providing our organization the opportunity to participate in the Victim's Impact Panels at W.J. Maxey Training School. Panelists from the MVA have been impressed with the treatment facility and the openness of its residents to speak about their personal traumas. It has become quite evident to all participants that your residents were first victims and then offenders. Our participation in these panels has aided many victims of violent crimes in coping and recovering from their personal experiences.

Lastly, I was very pleased to hear that our presentations to the MSU Criminal Justice Honor Society have been their most popular seminars. Providing education to the community on the effects violent crime has on victims is a critical goal of our organization. Michigan Victim Alliance is proud to have been a partner all of these efforts. We hope to continue to collaborate with you on projects such as these because I know that our future endeavors will be just as successful!

Sincerely,

J. Keith Etheridge  
Executive Director  
Michigan Victim Alliance